WESTWORDS

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Editor's Note: *Westwords* welcomes all students to submit papers, stories, or poems. These should be typed and double-spaced, and when submitted become the property of *Westwords*, and are not to be returned.

Trees

Trees are heralds of the return of spring--strong symbols of a vibrant season, of fresh brilliance, of a death that renews life in the souls of men. The trees of spring are varied--as the kaleidoscope of creation--but are invariably green--as hope is the spirit of spring.

Many of the contributors to *Westwords* have employed trees as images. Marianne Stanley in "Worldwind" sees them as violent, whipping away reality. In Merry Andrews' "deaf mute," a tree that has no sound is kin to a person who cannot speak. "Palm Sunday," by Sister Sean Patrice, C.S.J., offers boughs of olive and palm in a procession-poem for the King. In a lighter vein, but with more serious intent, Diane de Anda's central image in "Three Unfortunate Kings" is a mystical flower that reminds us of the tree of paradise.

Westwords would like to express its appreciation to Mr. Leo Fecht for designing the cover of the spring issue which both suggests the season and the prevailing image--trees.

TJK

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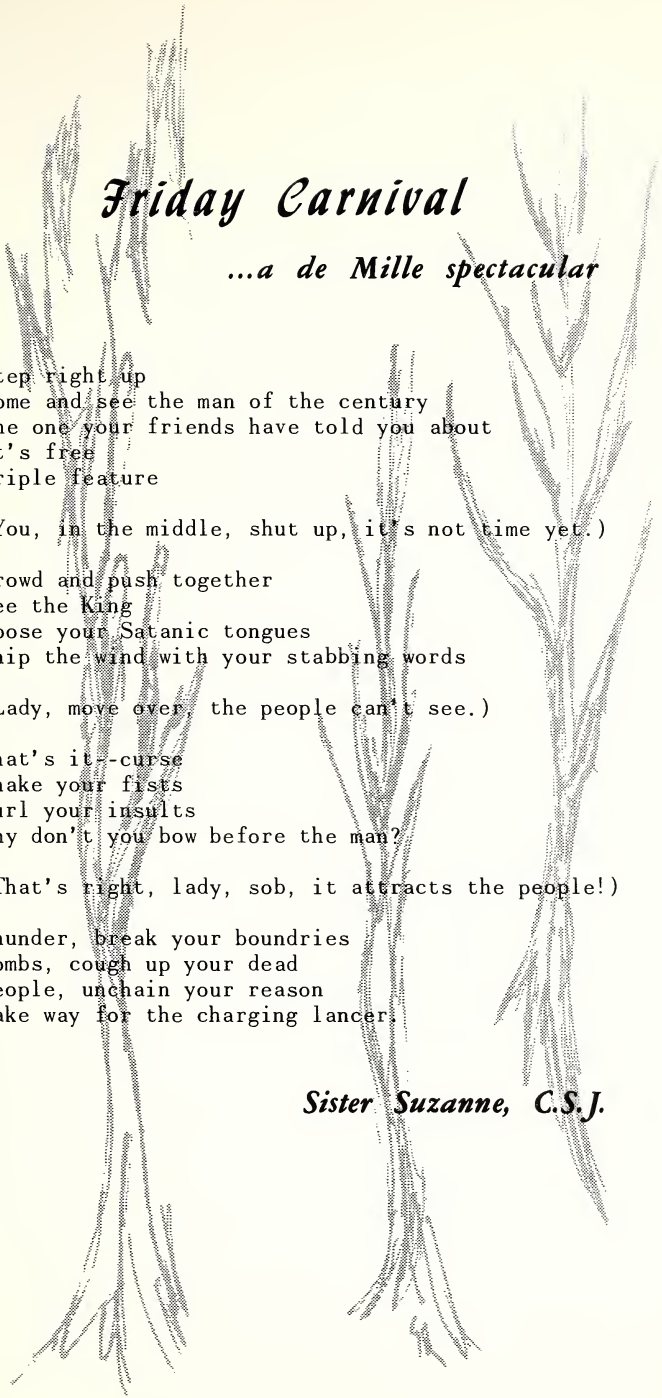


Friday Carnival

...a de Mille spectacular

Step right up
Come and see the man of the century
The one your friends have told you about
It's free
Triple feature

(You, in the middle, shut up, it's not time yet.)

Crowd and push together
See the King
Loose your Satanic tongues
Whip the wind with your stabbing words

(Lady, move over, the people can't see.)

That's it--curse
Shake your fists
Hurl your insults
Why don't you bow before the man?

(That's right, lady, sob, it attracts the people!)

Thunder, break your boundries
Tombs, cough up your dead
People, unchain your reason
Make way for the charging lancer.

Sister Suzanne, C.S.J.

Three Unfortunate Kings

Diane de Anda

Once on a broad green island between the earth and the moon, there lived a kingdom of powerful giants. Here devil grass sprawled across the hills like soft green down, and the rivers whisked along the curving slopes. And it was in this land that King Goodheart had ruled for 5000 years, and brought peace, happiness, and prosperity to all his people. But the king was not so happy himself, for he was now getting very old and had no heir to the throne. And the people, who loved their king, were sad to see him so downcast. So, they called a meeting, and all the giants of the kingdom came from the hills and from the valleys to decide what to do for their king.

"Let us build him a new palace, tall and straight, on the highest mountain."

"No, no," cried the rest. "It is a child the king wants; only a child will make him happy."

"I know," said a light-haired giant, "let us gather together all our jewels, the jewels of the whole kingdom, and offer them to the gods in return for a son."

"A bargain with the gods, of course, of course!" cried the people.

And so for days the people brought jewels of every sort and value and stacked them high in a deep, deep valley. The gods looked down and were pleased with the just king's rule, with the unselfish love of his people, and especially with the amount of the gift the people offered.

"A son in exchange, why surely," said the gods, and happily taking the jewels, they fused them into one huge white diamond three times the size of the earth. But now the gods wondered where they could put the stone so it would be both safe and shown off to all the universe. Looking down upon the earth, they thought of the soft brown earth of the unpeopled Sahara. "Perfect," said the gods as they watched two gods with great rounded arms push a corner of the glimmering stone into the soil, so that it looked like a huge flashing eye of the earth.

Then Coreolis, the winged messenger god, glided down to the king. The fleet-footed god passed the palace garden, the guards, the royal hall, until he stood before the king. Coreolis spread his hands out in salutation:

"Kind and just King Goodheart, because of the love of your people, you are to have a son, the mightiest ever

imagined. This son you are to raise on the island until his twentieth year, when he must travel to the land of the Sahara and for 1000 years must polish the white diamond of the gods. You are to live until his return, when you shall give him your crown."

The king, overjoyed, gladly accepted the god's terms, and so in the 5000th year of his reign, a son was born to King Goodheart, and he called the child Mikae, which means gift of the people. But the people called him son of the oak, because he grew from a small wish to a god among giants, with shoulders broader than the hills and so tall, that when he stood, he blocked out the sun.

When his twentieth birthday came, Mikae sadly said goodbye to his father and his people and travelled to the blinking eye of the earth. Here for 1000 years he buffed the jewel of the gods. Often he thought of his father and would say to himself, "I too will rule the kingdom with kindness and justice."

Meanwhile, on the isle, the kingdom had prospered, and in the deep caverns of the hills, the people had found wealth and jewels that neither god nor giant had dreamed existed. And the gods looked down and saw the island ablaze in the sky. The gods at once grew jealous, for the isle made the white diamond fade into the night. And so the gods, believing the people had tricked them in order to keep the finest jewels for themselves, decided to punish the kingdom. But their promise had already been given, and the mighty son would have to rule the isle on his return. So, the gods snatched the wealth and exiled all but the king to islands out of sight of the earth.

There was no one now to care for the land, and the sun dried up all the rivers and lakes so that the island became one great and ugly grey stone. King Goodheart grew sadder and sadder every day as he thought of his son's years of labor to become king of a dry clod of dirt.

The 1000 years passed slowly for the brave and brawny boy, and with great joy and expectation he finished his job and made his way home. Most of all, he could not wait to see his father, whom the gods had promised to keep alive until his return. Again the gods kept their promise, but again they twisted it to their liking, for the moment Mikae set foot on the crusty surface of the island, the old king died, and the gods delivered his body to the people in faraway lands. But they put his heart in a glass case and set the crown atop, for, in this way, they could fulfill their promise, since the son would receive the crown from the good king's heart.

The son, traveling the empty rocky valleys, could not believe it was the same rich land he had seen in his youth. Mikae stumbled through parched, grey fields, through the weak falling arches of the palace hall. Reaching the throne, he fell on his knees before the encased heart and wept in sorrow and in anger at the cruel tricks of the gods. He pushed the crown aside and put the box in his pocket.

He stood tall and shouted, "If it means my death, I will avenge my father and my people!"

In his anger, his power grew and his face twitched and the muscles of his great arms expanded, and looking down on the glittering eye of the earth where he had labored 1000 years through the treachery of the gods, he lifted the great and ugly rocky island up in his monstrous fist, and with power that even the gods had never seen, he hurled it at the dazzling white diamond. It shattered into billions and billions of glittering pieces that covered all the fertile land. Mikae looked down and laughed, and called the land's new cover sand. And to humiliate the gods, Mikae went to earth to find a mortal to be king of all the treasures of the gods. The gods looked down with fear and anger, but could do nothing while he carried the heart of the just king.

* * * * *

At this time all mankind lived in one green corner of the earth between two rivers and was ruled by one very gruff and rich king. And this land was a curious one, for all the townsfolk and bumpkins were short and thin and wore green, so when crowded together, looked like a field of thin-bladed grass. These spent their entire day preparing the nightly banquet for the red-robed rotund court and king.

As Mikae was looking over this valley, he caught a sparkle in his eye which reminded him of the brilliant land he had just created. "Whatever caused that shine, I shall make king over all the god's wealth," he decided.

Mikae looked closer and saw a banquet bowl fourteen feet in diameter, which had reflected the sun on its buffed surface. On the rim of the bowl stood an elfish man three feet high with a head so bald it almost outshone the bowl. His fuzzy red eyebrows twitched up and down with his bobbed nose as he scrubbed and sang:

Banquet kings
Eat sticky things,
Leave pots with rings;
What grief it brings!

"Now over you go mighty bowl, and we'll wipe the soot from your bottom." And he stood on the rim with his potato skin shoes and began to bounce up and down singing:

Cecidil
Never stays still
Works until
The soot is nil

Ker-plunk, the bowl flopped over, and Cecidil toppled under it. He scrambled from side to side babbling and pounding on the walls of the bowl. Mikae threw back his head and laughed a laugh that barreled like thunder across

the valley. The bowl stopped bouncing, Cecidil stopped muttering, and all was still for a long moment. Then suddenly began a hob-nob, hob-nob-nob, hob-nob, hob-nob-nob, and the bowl echoed and rolled the sounds from side to side.

Mikae lifted the bowl and saw Cecidil holding his bony knees, trying to keep them from bouncing together. Just as he had got them under control, he looked up, saw Mikae, and the two knees began to mash each other, and quickly he covered his mouth to catch a hiccup.

Run, run he thought, but his knees were bouncing against each other so hard that it was all he could do just to stand there.

Mikae was very sorry he frightened the potshiner and took him up in his hand. At this Cecidil rolled into a ball, hands over head.

"Have no fear my fortunate little friend, for I have come to do you a great favor. I too was a buffer like yourself, and since it was the will of the gods that through my buffing I should gain a kingdom, I think you have earned the same.

"I will give you a kingdom where the land is made of jewels which gleam in the eye of the sun. You will reign over this kingdom in justice and kindness, and for your subjects you will take the bumpkins of this kingdom and will rule in the envy of the gods themselves."

Cecidil looked on in disbelief. A kingdom, wealth, fame--he stood now and began to puff out his chest, but then stopped to ask, "What must I do for this special privilege, sir.giant?"

"As I said, you must rule in kindness and justice and then do what you wish. But, there is only one way you will be safe from the anger of the gods for ruling in their place. Take this heart and plant it in the royal garden. A tall, white,many-petaled flower will grow out of it and will spread its perfume of protection throughout the kingdom. Only so long as the flower is left in place to spread its fragrance will you be safe from the vengeance of the gods."

Cecidil then dismounted from the giant's hand and taking a spoon twice his size, struck the mighty pot. All his friends rushed before him and standing on top of the bowl, he told them of his and their good fortune. Mikae laid his hand upon the ground, and Cecidil and the villagers climbed up on it, and he took them to the center of the Sahara.

Scooping the glistening chips up with his hands, Mikae made a high plateau to catch the breezes once enjoyed by his native island and to bring it within the eyes of the gods. Digging his hand into the Nile, he scattered the fertile silt across the surface of the mound, and from the blend arose unplanted and fruitfilled gardens. Certain of the trees grew taller and closer together, and their branches leaned and intertwined to form houses for the new inhabitants. Mikae was very happy with what he saw, and so to

safeguard it, he dipped his finger into the rich, red land of the royal garden and dropped in his father's heart. Immediately the promised flower sprang up. But, as soon as the charmed heart left his hands, two bare-armed gods appeared at his sides, and writhing silver chains about his weakened body, dragged him away to the dungeon of the gods, never to be seen again.

Cecidil and his countrymen trembled as their bronze benefactor was carried away before their sad and helpless eyes. And then the men began to shout at the gods and the women began to weep louder and louder. Cecidil, seeing his subjects so violent, rushed before the group and held his hands out before him:

"My people, my people, wait! Neither our grumblings nor our tears can help Mikae. He knew what was going to happen, and, knowingly, he exchanged his life for our kingdom. All we can do is live as he wished in justice and kindness to one another in the jealous eyes of the gods. So, rejoice my people, and find your new homes."

And the green garbed men who had lowered their eyes when Cecidil began to speak, now lifted their faces and voices, and cheering their king and their fortune, trudged off to seek their separate homes.

All day long the men were seen singing and sawing and furiously fashioning furniture. And throughout the kingdom you could hear this song:

Tra-la-la, Tra-la-lee
A kingdom now you see
Where bumpkins rule what gods did own,
And bumpkins reap but have not sown,
Tra-la-la, Tra-la-lee
This is the life for me.

Up went diamond dressers and turquoise tables; branches were plucked and twisted into chairs and couches.

When evening settled on the newborn kingdom, the men travelled to the royal palace, for in the courtyard the women sat busily talking and waiting to be chosen as wives that very night. Into the courtyard marched the gay and proud men, nudging one another and laughing as they went. But, as soon as they saw the women sitting in the far corner of the courtyard, they stopped short and began to quietly fumble about. For an hour the groups secretly watched one another. Once two men almost walked across, but one poor fellow tripped on his way down the steps, and embarrassed, both hurriedly ran back and hid behind the motionless men.

Cecidil entered the courtyard with a new royal green cape draped across his shoulders, expecting to see all his subjects dancing about. Astounded at what he saw, or really what he didn't see, Cecidil rushed to the steps. "Why, why, why what has hap-." In his haste he forgot to lift the train on his robe and toppled down the stairs right into

the center of the courtyard. Quickly the men and women dashed to help the king who was kicking and wrestling with his twisted robes. Cecidil looked up at his people. The soft, white face of a young woman smiled down at him, and suddenly he began to laugh and roll and laugh and roll more into his robes. And as the bumpkins watched the rollicking king, they too began to laugh and point and talk to each other.

It was a long time before Cecidil stopped laughing, and when he did, he looked around him and was happy to see all his subjects dancing and singing. Cecidil scrambled to his feet and paraded around the floor, nodding helloes. But soon the king noticed that he was the only one on the floor alone, so sadly he bundled his royal train and made his way to the garden to look at the precious flower.

There beside the flower sat the maiden who had smiled at the king, inhaling its perfume. As the king neared her, she lifted her face and a long black curl rippled across her delicate shoulder. Cecidil tried to speak; he gasped. He noticed how her face mirrored the flower in the moonlight, how her dark eyes danced as she looked at the blossom.

"Wh-Wh-Who are you young woman?" he finally stammered.

She stood slowly. "My name is Cindrina. I was the red queen's chambermaid, but in a fit of jealousy, she accused me of stealing her gold-leafed mirror and expelled me from the palace. The courtiers mocked and laughed, and the king, joining in the sport, promised to have me banished from the kingdom and cursed with loneliness forever." At this Cindrina fell face forward on the grass and began to cry.

Cecidil hurried to comfort the maiden whom he had now come to love, promising that she, though not a bumpkin, was welcome to share the happiness of his kingdom forever. And Cindrina hearing his words looked up and saw in his face a kindness she had never known. Bowing at Cecidil's feet, she offered herself as a perpetual maidservant for the palace, but the king only smiled, and lifting her up before him, tood her she could live in the palace, not as a maidservant, but as queen of the kingdom.

* * * * *

For the next twenty years, the king and queen ruled happily in justice and kindness and kept their subjects well and happy. And the kingdom prospered and was filled with laughing, singing children, and of these children, five sons and a daughter were born to Cecidil and Cindrina. The eldest son grew taller than most men of the kingdom, and everyone said it was right that he should, for he was to inherit the crown and would rule with might as well as justice. The second and third sons were sportsmen, and the townsfolk always wondered what these two looked like, for all they ever saw were two riders masked in great swirls of dust as they dashed past after a rabbit or a fox. The fourth son was a philosopher and spent his days in study in

the royal courtyard. Once a week the young men of the kingdom would assemble in this yard, and he would teach them all he had learned that week and add his own ideas. The last son was a little smaller than his father and, so, inherited all his father's old robes. All the townsfolk would try not to laugh at the boy as he walked through the streets in robes whose shoulders met his elbows.

Cecidil had a special love for his daughter Melinda, who had her mother's white and delicate skin, but whose long bobbing curls were as red as her father's eyebrows. Now Melinda knew her father loved her very much and never wanted to make her unhappy for the slightest moment, so she did what she pleased with no worries. Once while she was walking in the village, a little boy saw her curls bobbing and shining in the sun. His eyes swayed and bobbed with the lovely curl. He reached out to touch it. Just as he did, Melinda turned and bit down hard on his finger.

Melinda spent hours watching herself in the mirror as she brushed her dazzling hair. And every day she would lean out her balcony and stare at the flower, thinking how much more beautiful it would look in her hair.

Once she fastened the two flower-guards' suspenders together while they were polishing their swords. When they started to march back and forth again beside the flower, he elastic stretched out and then back again, and they went flying into each other and fell to the ground. Quickly Melinda dashed to snatch the flower. Just as she was about to pick it, her hunter brothers galloped into the courtyard and, seeing what she was planning to do, they gave their horses a fast jab, and catching one of her long curls, dragged her away from the precious blossom. They jumped off their horses and began to scold her: "Melinda, father has told you you must never touch the flower. Something horrible will happen if you do, more horrible than you could ever imagine." But Melinda stamped her foot and ran to her room, and every day she would still peer out at the well-guarded flower.

On the twentieth anniversary of the kingdom's founding the king told his children that each was to have a dream fulfilled as his was twenty years before. The six sat back quietly and thought. The first son then approached: "Father, I have nothing to ask of you, because as heir to the throne, I will receive the biggest gift you could hope to give." The second son asked for the fastest horse in the kingdom, the third a hunting hound, the fourth a library of his own choosing, and the fifth a room filled with royal robes. The king quickly nodded to the wish of each, and then turned to his beloved little daughter. With wide-lashed eyes, she begged: "Oh, father, there is only one gift that will make me truly happy, and that is the white flower in the royal garden."

Poor Cecidil was locked between two promises and told the little one to go to her room, and he would send her her gift. For two hours he paced, tripping over his robe each

time he turned. At last he hit upon a solution, and gathering all the townsfolk around him, he asked them each to bring a flower of a different kind and set it at the princess's doorstep. Soon flowers filled the doorstep and the entire palace before it, so that when the princess awoke and opened her door, she beheld an ocean of color and fragrance.

The princess dashed out and ran quickly among the flowers, searching for the one of her choice. Not finding it, she hurried to her father and cried, "Father, my gift, my gift, where is the gift you promised?" And the poor king with trembling voice answered, "I--I--I cannot grant your wish my daughter, for it would mean death for the kingdom. It was in return for their lives that the people gave you their flowers."

But the princess stamped her foot, ran to her room, and locked the door. For a week she stayed locked in her room, receiving neither visitors nor food. The poor king grew more and more worried. Finally on the eighth day he had the guards remove the door, and there he saw the princess draped across the chair like a flimsy scarf, pale and barely able to speak. She looked at her father's empty hands and turned away her face. King Cecidil could take no more and rushed to the garden, plucked the sacred flower, and placed it in her hands.

As soon as the princess grasped the flower, the earth began to thunder. It swirled harder and faster until it became a funnel, and the whole kingdom and everyone except the princess was swallowed into the center of the earth.

When it finally calmed, the princess found herself alone with the flower in the great and empty desert. Looking down at the flower, she began to hate herself and to hate the flower even more. So, she ripped the petals from the stem and blew them into the wind. As she did, the two bare-armed gods appeared and with huge black shears cut off all her rust-colored curls, which, falling, turned the great, rushing Nile muddy. Roughly they dragged her off to a dungeon filled with mirrors where she would have to face herself forever. But the gods could not destroy the beauty of King Goodheart's kindness, for where each petal fell, the tall spires of a jeweled palace cut their way through the earth. And these palaces are all there to this day. No one has ever told of them, because all who find them never want to leave, for here are the kingdoms of perfect justice and kindness.

Lent

Jane Luecke

I'm roundly rotund, too famished to fast,
So banish dry toast and water-weak tea.
I treat myself to a healthy repast.

A man of my tastes can't possibly last
On morsels anemic, too scarse for a flea.
I'm roundly rotund, too famished to fast.

The sight of my meals sets beanpoles aghast;
They dine on crackers and weeds from the sea.
I treat myself to a healthy repast.

With candies and cookies and puddings avast
The table's sweet-laden especially for me.
I'm roundly rotund, too famished to fast.

The slim social sippers aloudly bombast
They call me a glutton, but I disagree.
I treat myself to a healthy repast.

A diet's prescribed to repair pounds amassed,
But vainly I laugh and call out with glee,
I'm roundly rotund, too famished to fast.
I treat myself to a healthy repast.

Orange

Donna Goebel

orange is hot
and cold,
it is always
very something,
never only halfway
there.
it screams
of life;
is not content
with mere existence.
it is love:
fire-pure and
all consuming.
orange is joy
that makes you
shiver,
and sorrow
that is a flame.

Wedding Hand

Jane Luecke

They cross to clutch the green taped buds and wait
The sound beginning the dance. They press the path
In sheet smooth swirls, in waves, and level the late
And early. A vacuum tune, a pointed path
To waltz on wood and whisk the dust away.
They twirl a circle silver and dip spice smells
Detergent deep. Then leap, a child at play,
A cry, a tap to back that tells so well
To wash the stains of salt and balance now.
Then off in reels, these circles touch so tender
And mix the scent of Jergens in coffee glow
And polish the pink to freckle brown, much softer
They cross on green taped buds. A turn now,
They pause to hold their poise, a timeless bow.

Three Parisian Apartments

Colleen Gillen

When Lambert Strether, the hero of Henry James *The Ambassadors* (New American, February, 1960), arrives in Paris from Woolett, Massachusetts, he is at once pleased and confused by the people and things he encounters. He finds everything and everyone extremely compelling, yet surrounded with an air of vagueness and inscrutibility. But as he acquires new standards and values, he is able to penetrate beneath surfaces so that he sees the reality surrounding the charming people and places of Paris. This transition from vague awareness to penetrating vision is paralleled by the difference between his original and final views of the apartments of Miss Gostrey, Chad Newsome and Mme. de Vionnet. The apartments reflect the character of their inhabitants as Strether's changing impressions of the apartments reflect his deepening knowledge of his Parisian friends.

Maria Gostrey, an American who befriends Strether in England and accompanies him throughout his stay in Paris, moves about from place to place like a bird in flight. As she travels she spends a great deal of time shopping and bargaining, gathering "the makings of a final nest."

When Strether first visits her apartment it impresses him as being crowded and dusky. He hesitates to sit down for fear of disturbing some piece of old brocade that has been strewn about. In the innermost nook, which he compares to a pirate's cave, he is aware of glints of gold and patches of purple--acquired objects about which "nothing was clear...except that they were precious." Strether immediately likes the room, but is confused about its arrangement. In much the same way, he is fond of Miss Gostrey even though he is frequently confused by their conversations.

As Strether gradually attunes himself to the ways of Paris, however, he finds himself more at ease in the company of Miss Gostrey. When he is ready to leave the city, he pays a final visit to her home, and now finds it "sacred to pleasant knowledge, to intimate charm, to antique order, to a neatness that was almost august." Where once his eyes had been distracted by numerous unmatched and unrelated things, they are now held and comforted by "the charming effect on the board bare of a cloth...of small old crockery and old silver, matched by the more substantial pieces happily disposed about the room." The objects that now catch his eye are not meaningless acquisitions, but rather they suggest a connection with Miss Gostrey's

past and a reflection of her present life. Strether has come to know her well and he now takes in her surroundings with ease and clarity.

When Lambert Strether first becomes acquainted with Chad Newsome, the object of his Parisian mission, he is pleasantly surprised. Instead of the reckless high-living youth he was prepared to deal with, he finds a charming, cultured young man whose surroundings attest to a comfortable, ordered life.

Chad's third floor apartment diffuses a "quality produced by measure and balance, the fine relation of part to part and space to space...aided by the presence of ornament as positive as it was discreet." It has been furnished and decorated with luxurious good taste. The splendid interior chamber opens onto a long continuous balcony overlooking the Boulevard Malesherbes "with the great hum of Paris coming up in softness, vagueness." On Strether's first visit "the distinguished front and balcony testify to something that was up and up." The interior impresses him as the ultimate in casual elegance, admirably suited to the life of a fine confident young man.

As Strether stays on in Paris, he comes to know Chad more intimately and gradually discovers complexity and tension in a life he had previously considered open and carefree. On one of his last visits to Chad's apartment Strether sits alone for nearly an hour waiting for Chad to return home. The room is no longer gay and lively. Where he had once been awed by a fine balance and harmony, he now finds stark contrast. Within the mellow circle of light from a single lamp he sits in a comfortable easy chair next to "a novel lemon-colored and tender, with the ivory knife athwart it like a dagger in a contadina's hair."

He cannot recover his original impression of the apartment, but only feels a relish quite like a pang as the voices floating up to the balcony had grown thicker and meant more things." Like the voices floating up from the streets of Paris, Chad's apartment and the objects in it have acquired deeper and more precise meaning for Strether. The dagger athwart the tender novel suggest to him an impending tragedy in Chad's illicit affair with Mme. de Vionnet.

When Strether is introduced to Mme. de Vionnet he is greatly impressed by her subtlety and depth. The more he sees and converses with her, the more he comes into her confidence, yet the exact nature of her relationship with Chad remains, for a long time, unexplained. When he first calls at her apartment he finds himself in the presence of "relics...little old miniatures, medallions, pictures and books," inherited from a past age of nobility and dignity The air of supreme respectability and private honor, which recalls to Strether the serene pre-revolution period, is matched only by the charm and reserve of Mme. de Vionnet herself.

After Strether learns that Chad and Mme. de Vionnet are lovers, he pays her one last call and finds, as he had with his other two friends, that her surroundings impart a different impression. The room has been stripped for the summer and is lit, not by bright chandeliers, but by "a pair of clusters of candles that glimmered over the chimney-piece like the tall tapers of an altar." The antiques in the room once again awaken his historic sense, but this time the impressions of Paris come in as "on the eve of... the days and nights of revolution...They were the smell of revolution, the smell of the public temper--of perhaps the smell of blood." These impressions of violence reveal to Strether the misfortune and grief in Mme. de Vionnet's affair. The altar-like candles represent her sacrifice in foregoing personal honor and happiness for the sake of her lover, and reveal the conflict beneath the serene and noble surface of her life.

Lambert Strether has learned from his stay in Paris to take life as it comes and to see things as they are. As the aura surrounding people and places is bared before his vision, he sees in Miss Gostrey's home order where he had seen confusion; in Chad's, perplexing tension where he had seen soothing luxury; and in Mme. de Vionnet's, violence where he had seen noble serenity.

Rivulets

Jeanne Schanbaar

Once upon a time,

a part of all good things,

is a no-time, all-time, daggone

long-time

a

long-time

bake-time it took to cook

a four and twenty blackbirds-pie,

once upon a time.

Sailing the Mail

Patricia O'Gara

To sail

Across the sea

In the wake of a whale

Would be a great way to carry

The mail

Sea of Wheat

Patricia C. Chapman

Swelling

Wind-waves billow

Dipping, rolling, curving.

Golden stillness grows--a field stands

Becalmed

Spring

It comes
with birds and bees
with flowers and trees and
buds that bloom and make you feel like
sneezing.

Parable

The kingdom on earth
is like
a smile,
hidden in a crowd;
is yeast,
precious
stone, tree
bearing;
and net,
with but
a few choice fishes.

Sister Marie Margaret, C.S.J.

Spring to Fall

May looked of summer when we were young.
The roadside, slanting up, shone with yellow
blooms as we walked through sunny arbors hung
with grapes that, purple-clustered, promised the mellow
wine to come at harvest. It couldn't have been
the heady wine that made the hillside glow,
tan-frosted with winter chaff over a skin
of bright new grass (but grass will blow
soon and gather in swirls of green-brown).
Clover, pink-light and white, formed pools,
dotting the summer with color, sprinkling down
through July.

October scatters leaves and cools
the ground, passing a brilliant red hand
over twig-tips, and autumn gilds the land.

T. Jeanett

Wind and Fire

Where you see the willows, there is the place of wind.
If you look carefully, you will find a stir
growing among the slender silver whirr
of schools of fish--you will see how streaks of fins
dip with delicate troughs and crests, and swim
and leap out to catch the wind. They want her
to smooth their brittle scales, to soothe the fir-
like prickly spines, to polish them, dull as tin.

Fire is brother to wind. He passes a light
tongue swiftly over unshining tension of gold
and curls it, an in-curving swing, smoothed
to a perfect ring--metal made whirling bright.
But fire is bound to hearth, would break the hold,
and leaping up, beckons--wind is strangely unmoved.

Judgment

"I'm black," you say, and how does it mean to state
just flatly, black. Maybe black is not--it's none;
and yet I'd say--and rightly so--we rate
the good of much by contrast to the sun
in brilliance: onyx, ebony, raven hair,
a night as black as stars can glitter light--
these gleam darkly: thus we think them fair.
What is there in black that precludes right?
"All right, I'm brown." I'll answer you again:
the brown is earth, is walnut, bark of tree,
is what means life and warmth to green and men;
it reaches upward with the hills, is free.
Would beauty that we find in spring and white
exist if there weren't winter, and the night?

roger

Interlude

Night is a time both of darkness and of the gleam of stars
and moon, and strangely fuses two delights--
light and the black covering of colors from the heights
of mountains and from the deepest places of canyons where bars
of rock welded by time interplay with spars
of pine. Two darknesses meet and melt where sight
is still possible somewhere somewhere in the middle. Bright
wavers here, keeping two circles of shade apart.

In the moment of grey, of half-color, the last
guests of day accustom eyes to absence
of brown and green--blue remains, and white,
but more than these, a wonder at the fast
and silent hold night takes, and the soft cadence
of the dark-people, the whisper of sand in the night.

Elegy
(for e.e.c.)

Camille Esselle

the wHite fyre ends,
soft.
Now green-yellow dull, poet gone,
for again
Now bright same greens grow
grow
green sway--the
lovers, limbs thee touch
for each again,
again,
but
not
Again

Eyes

Marie Hediger

The eyes of the cat by the fire
are wells
that have no echo.
In their depths
floats a mysterious past--
long ago
far away--
Teasing the shortened rope
of humanity's bucket.

Temporal Order and the Theme of Sterility in Anna Karenina

Carole Rounds

Temporal order in Leo Tolstoy's masterpiece *Anna Karenina* (N. Y., 1961) is set by the image of the train and the wheel. The wheel, in turn, connects the time theme to the theme of sterility and death in the fiery passions of Count Vronsky and his mistress Anna.

The movement of the train itself establishes the first concept of time as a linear progression of events moving toward a destination. The momentous events that propel forward the entangled lives of Vronsky and Anna are linked in a series by the setting of the train and the railway station. As Anna arrives by train in Moscow to try to repair the marriage of her brother Stiva and his wife Dolly, she meets Vronsky for the first time. "A smile lit up her face, an affectionate smile intended for him" (p. 77). Vronsky responded, "gazed at her without taking his eyes off her and, without knowing why, smiled" (p. 77). This simple bond of attraction is, however, overshadowed from this first meeting by a "bad omen" (p. 80). A man is killed--a gruesome death under the wheels of a train. This omen foreshadows and prepares the link between the theme of time and that of death.

Although her visit manages to restore the appearances of happiness to the Oblonsky marriage, Anna destroys the affection between Vronsky and Dolly's sister Kitty and and begins to destroy her own marriage to Karenin. Her presence at the Shcherbatsky ball captivates Vronsky's entire interest. Anna is "intoxicated by his adoration" and his face "mirrored" her happiness (p. 95).

The following day Anna returns to Petersburg by train, and a circular theme is set in motion. Her journey is not seen now merely in linear terms of progress, but is beginning to be circumscribed by a cycle of leaving and return. It is also on this return journey to her husband and son that the initial suggestions of sterility and frustrating sameness creep into the cycle. Anna lights a torch to read an English novel, but all around her is the dull repetition "of the same jolting and knocking; the same snow beating against the window, the same transitions from steaming heat to cold and back again...and the same voices" (p. 114). Anna soon found no pleasure in her reading. "She was too eager to live herself" (p. 114). Her stream of thoughts reflected back upon Vronsky, and her mind wandered from

the novel. Doubts began to overwhelm her; her frustration grew. "She could not even make up her mind whether the train was moving forward or backward or had come completely to a standstill" (p. 115). She groped her way to the door and the fresh air of the platform only to discover that Vronsky had followed her. The joy of this brief encounter produced "a feeling of discontent with herself when she met Karenin the next morning. It was that old familiar feeling indistinguishable from hypocrisy which she experienced in her relations with her husband" (p. 118).

Anna's smoldering passions became uncontrollable as the months passed. She and Vronsky soon disregarded all pretenses of propriety. Karenin and Anna are estranged, and their lives are tormented by the environment of each other in which they must live.

Anna, in desperation, finally sends for Vronsky because she is both "ill and unhappy" (p. 363). That afternoon before his visit he has the first dream of the old peasant, who like the traditional "Reaper" symbolizes the inevitability of death. This marks the beginning of the final turn of the iron wheel--toward the unyielding, inescapable end. Vronsky awakes from this dream and lights a candle in an attempt to dispel his horror. When he arrives at the Karenin house, however, he finds Anna brooding over death. She, too, has had a peasant dream. She had seen him in her bedroom, bent over a sack while muttering in French *"'Il faut, le battre, le fer, le broyer, le petrir...'"* (p. 369). Anna is convinced that she will inevitably die in the birth of Vronsky's child.

Anna does almost die in childbirth, and, while she has committed herself to death, she asks the forgiveness of her husband, repenting her past actions. Vronsky, left only with his "vicious circle of memories and ideas" (p. 423), attempts to commit suicide. They both recover, however, and the cycle of their lives continues as it was before.

Their progression in life together would ordinarily imply growth, for love between a man and woman is a fertile relationship. But, Anna's and Vronsky's passions are too violent and bear only the seeds of their own destruction. Their lives become stationary and sterile. The wheel of the train turns back upon itself choked by the overgrowth of their fiery, all enveloping desires.

This final stage of the cyclical drama begins with their return to Moscow--the city in which it had begun. Severe quarreling was now making their life together impossible. As Anna lay in the darkness of her room, only a "simple guttering candle" (p. 743) resisted the encroaching shadows. That night the shadows rushed forward and back until they plunged into final darkness. Another peasant dream occurred. This time, the old man was bent over a piece of iron "paying no attention to her but doing something dreadful over her with the iron" (p. 744). Time is an unyielding, insensitive iron in her life, and death

becomes the compassionless end that must complete the final turn of the wheel.

When Vronsky leaves her the following day, Anna feels the "great darkness when the candle had gone out and the terrible nightmare of the peasant merge into one" (p. 746). As she drives to the railway station in an attempt to escape from her life as it is, she experiences the despondency of futility and uselessness. She agonizingly feels the vicious circle of her passions that both "loved and hated him" (p. 756).

From the window of the train the peasant appears to Anna for the fourth time as he bends down to the carriage wheels. The train begins to move forward, and Anna realizes that she cannot even imagine "a situation in which life would not be a torment" (p. 758). "Why not put out the candle when there is nothing more" (p. 758); death becomes the only escape from her static existence. As the train stops at the station, she recalls the death of the man under the wheels of the train the day she had met Vronsky at the train station. Anna feels the "impossibility of struggling" (p. 760), and she throws herself under the iron wheels of the train. "The little peasant, muttering something, was working over the iron. And the candle, by the light of which she had been reading the book filled with anxieties, deceits, grief and evil...went out forever" (p. 760), completing the cycle of her life in a sterile death in the same place it had begun.

Vronsky, too, was encompassed within this inevitable circle. With her death he became a "wreck of a man" (p 772) and suffered his own spiritual death. On a train moving toward war, he remembers her death and her meeting and is inflicted with a "totally useless but ineradicable remorse" (p. 772). The wheels of the train carried him "to die" (p. 771) at war with the Turks.

Time had progressed, but as it was held within the lives of Anna and Vronsky, it merely completed an impassioned cycle that ended in death--one as unyielding as iron because it was stagnated by their destructive passions. The sterility they bred prevented growth in a spiral vision of temporal order in life that revolves in cycles but moves forward at the same time. The action of the plot and the characters of Anna and Vronsky merely form a circular pattern of the iron wheel revolving back upon itself.

Summertime

A boy aims.

Plunk!

Dancing, twisting sunlight

swirls through stone-rippled water.

Patricia C. Chapman

The Cloud Herder

Sister Sean Patrice, C.S.J.

The cloud herder blows his flocks into
Sky pens to shred icy fleeces
Like carding wool in twisted skeins.

He sends the shorn to blue pastures
To fatten for a storm. Hour by
Hour they grow filling up the plains.

When their coats are puffed and tufted
With ram's wool wet-weight darkened,
He gathers them for season's rains.

Palm Sunday

Pueri Hebraeorum
Portantes ramos olivarum. . .

Jewish boys sullen settle with
scrolls of scripture
while spring outside
charges air fresh,
hills green-dusted.

Zachariah to read today:
he prophesies
the king coming
who rules with peace.
when? long from now.

Minds, eyes, flirt from scrolls to windows,
distant tremors
louder, nearer
become voices
insistent: come.

Hosanna filio David
eager hearts help
hands, feet: up, through,
over, dash, fly
to crowds below.

Boughs of olive, branches of palm
wave, spread to him
throned on ass's colt.
silence only
where rabbis teach.

Sister Sean Patrice, C.S.J.

And the Wind Blew

Kathryn Kenyon

Young Seth bent towards the ground. His foot rested and the tired shovel saw the hole it dug. The plain was wide, the wild grasses rolled their heads and reed-tops fell beneath the wind. Seth stooped and pitched another scoop of empty dirt beside his muddy feet. The hole grew deep and soundless, yet he heard a cry--a cry that stretched to him from the grasses' silent roots.

The sun looked down between the sooty gusts of reeling smoke that rose from the lonely chimney and the celebrating colours of the spring-blooms chased each other over the marshy green.

He dug, that hole becoming dearer to him as he felt the softness of the soil. And though he did not see the child asleep beneath its binding shroud, he knew it slept inside the house beside the warming fire in its cradle-coffin.

Old Haggai, rabbi of yesteryear, leaned upon his window ledge. He saw the children on the street below as they carried the shalach-mones, the gifts for friends and family. They shouted and sang to one another and their voices rattled with the horns and noise.

"Good Purim, good Yom Tov."

"Good Yom Tov."

Old Haggai smiled, his naked gums veiled by years of coarse beard and wisdom. "Good Yom Tov, too. Heh..., a good Purim." And then the shadows of the stunted corners in the room echoed silent laughter. He moved from the window and sat beside the oven where incense of baking cakes wafted.

"Listen, Leah, rabbi's wife," and he caressed the handles of his parchment scroll.

"Here is the Megellah, the story in the precious Book of Esther. Leah, pray." His wrinkled eyes measured the walls and his wife's balding, bowed head. He coughed with a rasping heave and stroked his hairy chin. The room was lighted by the morning sun--the walls, the floor, but the rabbi sat in a dusky corner where the shadows fell.

"It is time for temple, Leah. I'm going to temple now to pray mine." He sighed a quick sigh and squinted at his wife.

"It's a beautiful day," and he laughed a croaking, dry laugh. He stood up to walk with bent knees that shook and his coat hung worn and loose around the hollow chest.

"Shalom." The door slammed shut; footsteps faded and Leah, rabbi's wife, listened to the children outside shouting. She laughed a little to herself in the sunny shadows and turned to her cakes baking in the oven.

The hole touched the depths of earth. Weary, Seth sat on a rock and laid the shovel down. His hands and head were weak with sorrow and his fingers pushed hard against his soiled eyes. He heard a sound, a cry, and saw a nesting bird beside a tree. No star, no sun, no cloud, no sky--just black earth in that hole, and he stood, he walked towards the house away from it. The only farm-hand on that plains-farm stood erect, then bent over, a brush in his hand as he stroked a horse, the horse. Seth came near him and the man looked down, away from Seth to the ground. Seth motioned slowly with his dirt-smudged, calloused hand, touched his mouth, and spoke as his gaze turned from house to man and back.

"Take the horse. Ride to town, Dmitri, and bring the rabbi here. His blessing, it's his blessing. The babe must be given rest and buried before the sun goes down." He held his hands up unconsciously in front of him in the air. He looked, not seeing, dropped them to his side and walked, desolate, into the house.

It was warm and quiet inside. A girl framed by bare walls reclined in a ragged bed and beside her stood the open, wooden box in which her newborn child lay. The fresh wind taunted at the shutters and young Seth sat beside his wife. He took her pale hands, her chilly fingers and touched them with his lips. She moaned; she pulled away and put her fingers to her infant's cheek. An open prayer book lay folded on the floor. He looked.

"Yis-gad-dal, v'yis-kad-dash sh'meh rab-bo.... My God! My God!" He could say no more.

Haggai stroked his hairy chin as he listened to the chants and prayers that lingered in the synagogue.

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God.... Haman the wicked, betrayer of my people is dead today," he whispered. For a moment he forgot the town, the synagogue, himself. He saw the wooden floor and saw the past as he sat thinking with a look of absence in his twitching cheeks. The windows let only a little light come into the room and the little that did had a greenish tinge from the tinted glass. Green, green. He had seen something green yesterday; what was it? He forgot. The green of costumes and young hair, he saw himself standing on the stage in youth, acting out a play. The play was long; it was beloved by everyone in the town, and the words were clearly said. The old man remembered there had been a baby in the audience. It had cried when everyone else had cheered; it had cried too loudly and he had yelled his lines above its roar and tears. Haggai smiled.

"The king's daughter. No, no it was the king's wife."

"Shhh," someone nudged him gently.

"The king's wife!" he repeated looking up--the syna-

gogue, the walls, and prayers. He saw it all around him and remembered it was spring and Purim.

Horse hooves pounded soil and ran through the grasses. The sun was high and hot, and still the plain stretched on.

"To the hills, the town," the horse's rider breathed into the listening vastness. And on they galloped leaving dust and broken reeds behind. There was an unfolding of wild-flowers and of a stream as Dmitri rode hunch-back and tense against the loneliness and against the reaching space. There was no wind, and yet he held his face to catch the cool breezes on his forehead and feel the air tumble from his eyelids to his ears. He made that wind that arose from nothing and swept up to touch him as he rode fast. He made that wind and he made the dust scatter. He felt alone and free, as a man who only dreams of freedom, and he urged the horse on faster with a loutish heel. But it tired; it slowed and walked and when he kicked its sides it snorted in defiance. The sun left noon and wound its downward gaze towards the hills. The town reposed behind the ups and downs of the humps in the hills. Infrequent trees squatted by the path to wave at some distant marshy green and a bird with tipped feathers turned round in circling wheels over prey.

There was a house, the first house, then another clinging near and soon the soil-road became a pebble one and the taste of air shared by many mouths lay on Dmitri's tongue. The horse walked on through the streets, turning corners, passing shops, and finally stopped before a flat-faced house that overstretched the noise and children running over the grey street pebbles. He climbed down, and he approached the door. He cleared his throat and spit before he knocked, swaying to and fro from toe to heel with assumed importance. He would move around the little room as a man of duty with news to tell.

"Rabbi, the child has come. The weak thing died before it even cried. Hurry now. Come back with me," he would say.

"No, that sounded wrong," he thought. He looked at the wooden mezuzah nailed on the doorpost, at the intricate carvings in the pattern of the letters written in it. He frowned to see the Star protrude so boldly from the wooden case, the six corners of that Star fine and pointed. He wouldn't kiss the holy thing as he entered.

"No," he would not. He frowned again and worried that the sky would darken, bringing night if he did not hurry. He tried to cough, but couldn't and scratched his head, still not knocking on the door. He heard feet move around inside the room. Self-sufficiency withered from him; he felt alone and heavy with the words.

"Leah," he called out to the open window impulsively, but softly, hoping no one had heard him.

An old woman opened the door slowly, first her head appearing, then shoulders, and as she recognised the rider, she opened the way completely.

"Dmitri, good Yom Tov, come in, do. Don't stand out there and gape," she smiled at him. He entered and stood looking anxiously at her.

"Leah, it's the rabbi I'm for today. Is he here 'bouts?"

"Eh," she laughed. "He's gone away to temple. And you know him--he'll stay out all day 'till the sun takes its warmth with it." He shuffled his two feet noisely.

"You sit here," she pointed in delight at the unexpected visit, "and I'll give you a Hamantaschen cake with fresh poppy seeds. What brings you into town today?" she turned her back and bent into the clay oven. "You come to celebrate with us?" She laughed again. His fingers stumbled on the table and he talked.

"The babe has come...."

"Come! Come at last, today?"

"No, yesterday, a son...."

"A son, a son, we rejoice."

"No, the babe is sleeping, Leah. He needs the rabbi's blessing. He's sleeping." Dmitri twisted his awkward hands to show the stillness and his nervous lips convulsed. The old woman stood over her oven with a cloth of wrinkles around her eyes comprehending.

"Sleeping? The Sleep?" she said.

Dmitri looked at the floor, stood and left the room, the house. He left the horse standing outside and walked towards the synagogue. The streets were shaded now by the buildings standing looking at each other from across the road. The window-eyes gazed at each other every day--in the morning with the shine of the sun, in the evening with the dullness of the shadows

"Before the sun goes down," Seth said. He now sat waiting outside his house, company with a cold wind, his face watching to the hills for an approaching rabbi. Dmitri walked quickly, his head hung down, staring at the street pass beneath him. A familiar shuffle, a familiar voice.

"Carpenter, say Carpenter."

"Ho good Yom Tov, Dmitri," the other waved.

"Do you know where the rabbi is, good friend?" he stepped urgently.

"He's gone to Svaboda's house above the stable." He hurried on still staring at the ground, his shoulders growing limper as he stepped. He saw the wooden stable doors around another corner. There was no speech there, only the voices of horses and a quiet fire of the smithy crackled. An empty hole sat outside the walls of the building, the chilling depths of it giving sunken music, strange carols from the tree seed. A pail of rusty water stood half spilled by the hole, the seed for a new tree yet unplanted was waiting in the pit until the holiday had passed to then be covered and begin to grow from the soil. Shouts of children almost echoed in the daylight, coming closer down the street. Dmitri went above the stable to the open door and called.

"Rabbi Haggai?"

"Good Yom Tov, come in. He's in the next room with the others. They're waiting for the children to come with Haman." The room was empty except for the voice and Dmitri went through it into the other. Men with ruddy cheeks and black or purple yarmulkes moved around the room, laughing, talking, shouting out the window to the nearing children. Pipe odours scattered in the air and spread throughout the house and street. But Haggai was not there.

"Good Yom Tov, Dmitri. You've come in time, they're almost here."

"The rabbi?"

"He's in with the grandmother there, through that door."

Dmitri knocked; no answer and he opened the door. Haggai stroked his hairy chin. His chair was beside a woman who sat blind and smiling. The rabbi read in Hebrew to her and she nodded gaily almost seeing the sights of those thousands of years ago.

"The children. Rabbi come," someone summoned. Haggai heard a shouting from the street intermingle with the prayerful air he breathed. The shouts stifled quiet thoughts and he turned from the Bible to the window.

"Dmitri!" he said in absorbed surprise. "Come, watch, they're going to hang our wicked Haman. Ah, but later comes the best," he put a hand on Dmitri, "they're going to act the play of Esther tonight." He turned to see the children beneath the window now. They carried a long pole and several carried the weight of a figure stuffed with straw and rags. A man was in their grasp, a stuffed man in effigy and they held him roughly with a childish contempt. The captive wore a torn shirt and a brown farmer's jacket. Straw bulged from the throat and a grotesque smile was drawn across the cloth face--that smile smiled knowingly and sadly at himself, at the children and the men crowded at the upstairs window. His arms were thrown up, then pressed to his sides as they tied a knot around the head.

"Hurrah," a voice came loudly.

And the children pushed the pole into the road and shouted as they hung him with a rope. They laughed and the rabbi smiled with them, his eyes leaping, alive with mirth and celebration.

"He is hung!" yelled someone. Then they set a torch to the grinning rags.

"Haman the wicked. Haman the wicked. Enemy of the Jews!"

In the shadow of the flames their faces shone with triumphant hate. Their eyes looked like men--old men who have plundered, slain, and died. The heat parched their skin and their eyes were red with descending smoke as the wind bore it earthward. And soon the ashes dripped from the pole to the road. The wind scattered them and there was nothing left but the empty pole and the grime of what had been.

The sun was straining on the plains, partly gone, shining less. Dmitri touched the rabbi's arm. There was no silence in the room.

"The babe has come, rabbi. He needs your blessing before the sun goes down."

"The babe, he...a son!" the old man looked up with glistening eyes. He marveled.

"Your blessing, rabbi, come. Hurry before the sun goes down. The grave is ready for him now," entreated the farm-hand pleading.

"The grave? But the sun is gone. It's dusk, Purim's done." He stood confused. He sat down slowly, his elbows on his knees, and pondered, resolute only to a tumult. His eyes were glazed with thoughts of the expected child. But his old mind rested from the shock of graves and he thought of something far away. He got up on unsteady legs, walked towards the door, his head creased and white and bowed, down the stairs, through the streets, the darkness folding nearer. Dmitri walked beside him and the old man mumbled to himself.

"Will go tomorrow. It's dusk and devils hide. Heh, a son." His eyes were closed and the wind blew. He shivered. He knew the way to his flat-faced house down the street. Each alone, yet together they walked to it and entered through the same door that, too, had celebrated Purim. Haggai touched the doorpost where the mezuzah hung. From habit he reached his hand to it and pressed his fingers to his lips, though all the while he stared in front of him, looking down in stupor, not conscious of his movements, and walked inside.

The house still settled under baking smells. But there was no light. The room had dimmed and on a table stood a glass, the candle, a flickering flame for something dead. The candle and the quiet fire in the hearth played figures on the walls and made the time seem tighter. Neither Leah nor Dmitri spoke, but the old man mumbled in confusion.

"Will go tomorrow. It's dusk. A son."

It was dusk, the sun gone, a moon fresh and high. Dmitri sat on a stool in the corner by the hearth. His task unfinished, he leaned against the wall, his head, guilty, glancing at the ceiling with a restless turn. He felt the whimper of a lonely cry that soared to the heights of clouds.

"Did you hear, did you hear?" he whispered, shaking the old man's calm, clothed arm.

"No...hear what? What?" he started from the darkness of his chair. And then he settled back again, his eyes closed, looking far away into the night, into his youth--something green, the play he had acted. He had yelled his lines above the baby's cry. And Dmitri did not answer.

Young Seth threw the dirt into the hole again. It thudded against the box and resounded in the grasses. The rabbi sat eating his poppyseed cake. The infant lay alone and a cold wind blew.

Coming of the Assyrians

Sennacherib, king of Assyria,
marched on the cities of Juda. . . .
like ashes in a kiln they shall be left
(Isaias).

We saw them there upon the distant hill
A flock of lambs half-hidden in spring mist.
A most ungainly group it was, and still
The certain dignity which we insist
Was theirs as they walked warm into the sun
Caught us off guard as if a ray of light
From some lone comet hurled from space had won
A small but brilliant battle with the night.
We turned north then--it was the last we saw
Of lambs or peaceful fields just turning green.
Our stubbled lands were still but for the caw
Of crows above the ashen battle scene.
Always the hollow clank of armor sings
A contrapuntal dissonance with spring.

We Rise

WE Rise

From many maps

Bearing blue lamps

To the sea gate.

Above the wind's wing

A star

Brings the dawn

Sister Mona Ann, C.S.J.

Worldwind

Marianne Stanley

We would see a world from this window
but two trees, tortured by wind,
writhe skyward, strain
east and west;
with wind-shift come
too strong together.
Inside we stand apart,
watch wind wrench branches
right and left;
wonder what words robbed
and won; how arms
stifled the sun.

Easter Sunday

Ginny Speltz

Ash boughs balance Him
between grey and sable

Until the winged rainbow
bursts in day.

The Ambassador

Camille Esselte

Henry James weaves his theme with a subtle warp in *The Ambassadors* (Harper, 1930). It is the theme of seduction. Ambassador Strether has a mission from New England to Europe--to reclaim Chad Newsome, errant heir. Gradually Strether is seduced from New England morality and rigidity to European charm and subtlety. James delineates this seduction by two main devices--the dialogue of Strether himself, and the person of co-ambassador Waymarsh. The portrayed seduction emerges real but ambiguous. Like Strether at the novel's conclusion, one cannot judge "good" nor "bad."

Madame de Vionnet, Chad's mistress, is the incarnation of Strether's struggle. Chad has been physically seduced. Chad preceded Strether to Europe, and prefigures corporally Strether's psychological seduction. As the novel opens, Strether denounces Madame de Vionnet to the European Miss Gostrey:

> "Charming?" Strether stared before him.
> "She's base, venal--out of the streets."
> "I see--and he?"
> "Chad, wretched boy?"

Dialogue reveals a frank, American Puritan, somewhat gauche in his simplicity. Prior to true encounter with Europe, Strether finds fact sufficient. Chad has not returned to Woollett, Massachusetts, his home. He has not assumed responsibility as a factory owner, nor observed filial duties. The agent responsible must therefore be bad. Strether equates "charming" with moral rectitude--this is evident when he counters "charming" with "base, venal...." Madame de Vionnet must be "out of the streets," then, and seduced Chad must be "wretched."

Miss Gostrey is unconcerned with Strether's distinction, and changes the topic to Chad's wealthy mother:

> "Is her life admirable?"
> "Extraordinarily!" There was so much in the tone that Miss Gostrey had to devote another pause to the appreciation of it.

There was vehemence in Strether's tone because "admirable," like "charming," held only moral connotations, and the life of Mrs. Newsome was morally irreproachable. Developing dialogue demonstrates Miss Gostrey as attuned to an absent subtlety.

Strether describes Chad's sisters, "both remarkably fine women." Miss Gostrey quickly equates remarkable with physical beauty, "Very handsome, you mean?" Strether maintains the moral and precise sense of his words. He clarifies,

> --"Mrs. Newsome I think, is handsome, though she's not, of course, in her first youth."
> --"And is wonderful," Miss Gostrey asked, 'for her age?"

The European lady finds terms like "admirable," "wonderful," "remarkable," facile. Their meaning is mutable, comprehended through "another pause to the appreciation of it." Strether is increasingly aware of the difference in their terminologies, of his nascent struggle. Ensuing dialogue reveals him anxious and uncomfortable.

> --"I don't say she's wonderful, or rather," he went on the next moment, 'I do say it. It's exactly what she is--wonderful. But I wasn't thinking of her appearance...."

Strether the moralist requires absolute precision. His precision here is more complex, however, than when he first dealt with "charming." At that point he assumed the moral connotations of his words were universal. Later, when Miss Gostrey equated his word "remarkable" with physical beauty, he became aware that these moral connotations were not universal. His prevision was simple correction. Here, for the first time, his precision is directed to his own terms. His statement is insecure. The rapidity of his corrections ("or rather...I do") reveals anxiety, a fear of disloyalty that precurses his later seduction. Strether is sensitive and responsive to the European mind, or else the manner of his precision would not have changed. This sensitivity is his vulnerability. It gives him an awareness that leads to his understanding and love, and seduction.

Strether's co-ambassador Waymarsh might have spoken the first lines of dialogue. Waymarsh, however, remains set in his dogmatism, and lacks the responsiveness necessary to speak the last lines. Waymarsh, in a way, is Strether crystallized, before encounter. One character refers to him.

> --Waymarsh? ....He'll resist even Miss Gostrey: so grand it is, not to understand. He's wonderful.... He doesn't understand--not one scrap.

As a constant character, Waymarsh emphasizes the change in Strether. "He doesn't understand," and Strether does. As Strether becomes conscious of the subtleties of speech, he becomes conscious of European culture, appreciative of that culture.

One major scene which reveals Strether's increased

appreciation occurs at the opera house, when he first meets Chad. He expects a dissolute youth, wasted by pleasures of the flesh. Instead he encounters a suave, attractive man, greying at the temples, far more refined than Strether himself. The shock of this meeting adds to his appreciation of Europe and the European manner:

> ...it was...definite to him that Chad had a way that was wonderful: a face carrying...an implication that...he had learned how. He had ...without intention taught Strether that, even in so small a thing as that, there were different ways.

It is the more conscious Strether that can read the implications a face carries. Chad is no longer the "wretched boy." Fact is no longer sufficient, and Puritan censure succumbs to admiration.

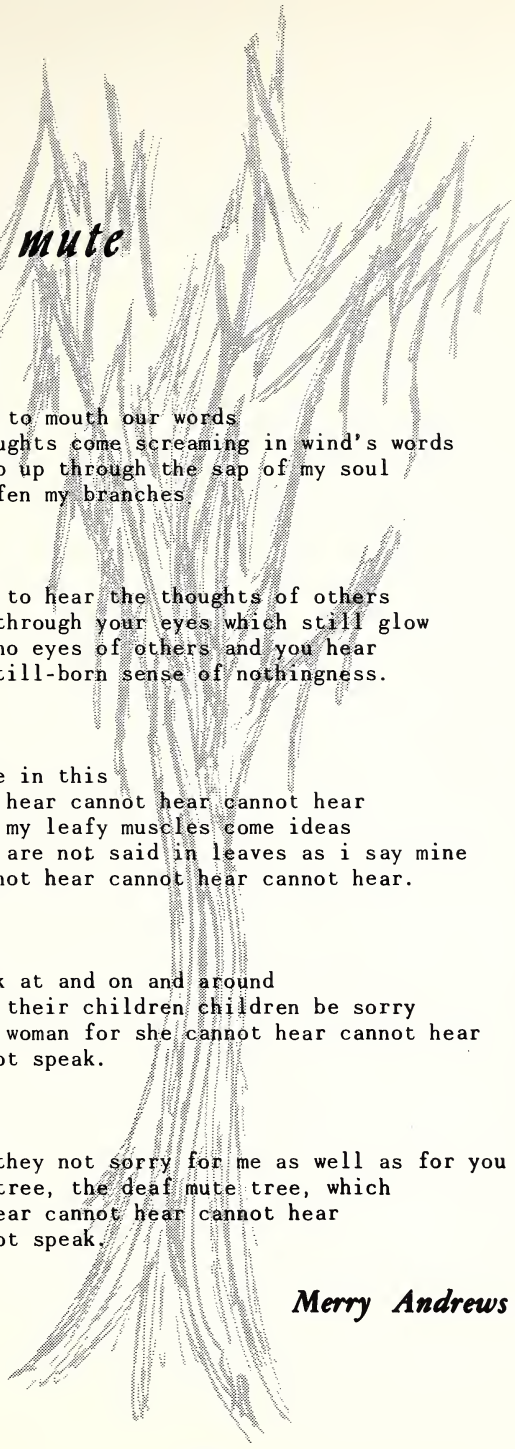
The seduction has reached its final stages. Strether's admiration leads him to ameliorate his reports to New England on Chad's activities and companions. Waymarsh the constant, the vigilant, reports Strether's misrepresentation, and Mrs. Newsome recalls Strether to America.

Confrontation with failure in his responsibility to Mrs. Newsome would have been catastrophic to the Woollett Strether. He would have been "Strether, wretched man..." even as Chad. The present Strether takes the news philosophically. Miss Gostrey is even drawn to comment,

> --How wonderfully you take it! But you're always wonderful."
> He had a pause that matched her own: then he had, with an adequate spirit, a complete admission.
> --"It's quite true. I'm extremely wonderful just now. I dare say in fact I'm quite fantastic, and I shouldn't be at all surprised if I were mad."

Strether is no longer gauche. Words of control and measurement describe him now--matching pause, "adequate spirit," "complete admission." He utters all the Gostrey words--"wonderful," "fantastic "--he is grand in defeat. He is also totally aware of his seduction.

deaf mute



we
you an i
are dumb to mouth our words
your thoughts come screaming in wind's words
mine seep up through the sap of my soul
and stiffen my branches.

we
you an i
are dead to hear the thoughts of others
you see through your eyes which still glow
the yes-no eyes of others and you hear
with a still-born sense of nothingness.

we
you an i
are alone in this
i cannot hear cannot hear cannot hear
for into my leafy muscles come ideas
but they are not said in leaves as i say mine
so i cannot hear cannot hear cannot hear.

we
you an i
they look at and on and around
and tell their children children be sorry
for that woman for she cannot hear cannot hear
and cannot speak.

we
you an i
why are they not sorry for me as well as for you
for the tree, the deaf mute tree, which
cannot hear cannot hear cannot hear
and cannot speak.

Merry Andrews

Thoughts

Thoughts are never quiet at the shore. They race or lope or crawl with the surf, and all the answers, if you are looking for answers, are in the loud-muted mouth of a wave. The noise blocks out all sounds and the result is a deafening silence. Each wave has a rhythmic sureness that comes with the next-certain swell, but they are never the same.

Sand snipers hunt for food at the ebb of one wave and race away with it before the next one comes. They must sense the balance between the water and the land. It is important to sense a balance. Riding a surfboard is a study in balance and control. The board is like human emotions. It can offer a thrilling ride if properly handled, but once out of control it can injure you. It takes practice to learn the art of balancing.

A child once said the water cared for the land. Sometimes it beats the rocks, but the rocks wash into the sea to become the sand of a quiet cove. When clouds hang low over the ocean, it becomes a familiar lake, a sure friend. At night it's wild--not frightening, just wild. The crash of the fluoresent white curl of the breaker renews the longing for adventure and the restlessness of spirit.

The Sea gives a heightened sense of life. By sitting in one place too long the tide will wash over you. Life is like that. Sit enough, but not too much. Things that are wet for a long time mildew and rot.

Water is a new promise and a new hope. The Sea is a promise, but its uniqueness lies in that you can fill in the lines of the promise. At the shore you are neither young nor old, just there, as the Sea will always be there. The Sea is adaptable.

Carrie Skirlick